

Message Text

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FM AMEMBASSY CANBERRA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 5183

INFO AMEMBASSY JAKARTA

AMEMBASSY LISBON

AMCONSUL SURABAYA

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PFOR, AS, PT

SUBJECT: AUSTRALIAN PRESS REPORTING ON PORTUGUESE TIMOR

1. MELBOURNE AGE OF MAR 4 CARRIES TWO ARTICLES BY ITS
SOUTHEAST ASIAN CORRESPONDENT, MICHAEL RICHARDSON, CURRENTLY
ON VISIT TO TIMOR DILI, WHICH MAY BE OF GENERAL INTEREST.
MAJOR POINTS AS FOLLOWS:

2. PORTUGUESE AUTHORITIES IN DILI MARCH 2 ARRANGED
INTERVIEW FOR AUSTRALIAN JOURNALISTS IN TIMOR WITH
TRADITIONAL CHIEF FELICIANO GOMES, WHO HAD BEEN JAILED FOR
SEEKING TO RECRUIT TIMORESE YOUTHS FOR GUERRILLA TRAINING
IN INDONESIA. GOMES SAID THAT AT MEETING IN ATSABE, ABOUT
50 KM. FROM BORDER, LAST NOV 1 REGIONAL RULER, RAJAH
GUILHERRE GONZALVES, HAD URGED STRONG PEOPLE FROM HIS TRIBE
TO GO TO INDONESIA FOR ARMY TRAINING. THEY WOULD THEN COME
BACK TO PORTUGUESE TIMOR TO FIGHT AGAINST PARTIES OPPOSING
MERGER WITH INDONESIA. GOMES CLAIMED THAT FOUR INDONESIANS
IN CIVILIAN CLOTHES HAD BEEN PRESENT AT MEETING NOV 1. ONE
INDONESIAN HAD SPOKEN GOMES' LANGUAGE; OTHERS SPOKE MAIN
DIALECT USED IN PORTUGUESE TIMOR (SIC; NOT SPECIFIED).
GOMES SAID HE RETURNED TO HIS VILLAGE AND EXPLAINED TO HIS
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PEOPLE WHAT RAJAH HAD SAID. HE WARNED THAT IF SUITABLE

PEOPLE DID NOT GO, THOSE THAT DID GO TO INDONESIA MIGHT KILL THEM ON THEIR RETURN. HE SAID 17 PEOPLE HAD GONE TO INDONESIAN TIMOR BUT DID NOT KNOW WHETHER THEY HAD COME BACK. GOMES SAID HE WAS ARRESTED AND BROUGHT TO DILI 64 DAYS AGO (SIC; PRESUMABLY END OF DEC, 1974) AND CHARGED WITH INCITING PEOPLE TO CROSS BORDER INTO INDONESIAN TIMOR.

3. SEPARATE RICHARDSON ARTICLE STATES NEW POLITICAL ASSOCIATION CALLED ADITLA (DEMOCRATIC ASSOCIATION FOR INTEGRATION OF EAST TIMOR INTO AUSTRALIA) WAS BEING FORMED BY HENRIQUE PEREIRA, 55, WHO FOUGHT WITH AUSTRALIAN COMMANDOS AGAINST JAPANESE FORCES ON TIMOR DURING WORLD WAR II. PEREIRA QUOTED AS SAYING ONE OF PRINCIPAL AIMS OF ASSOCIATION WOULD BE TO OPPOSE ANNEXATION OF PORTUGUESE TIMOR BY INDONESIA. PEREIRA CLAIMED ASSOCIATION WOULD ATTRACT MUCH MORE POPULAR SUPPORT THAN PARTY CHAMPIONING MERGER WITH INDONESIA AND NEW GROUP WOULD BE APPROVED BY PORTUGUESE AUTHORITIES WITHIN MONTH. ASSOCIATION'S PLATFORM ALLEGEDLY STILL BEING DRAWN UP, BUT IT WOULD PROPOSE THAT PORTUGUESE TIMOR BE RUN BY JOINT AUSTRALIAN-TIMORESE COMMISSION, WITH AUSTRALIA RESPONSIBLE FOR FOREIGN AND DEFENSE POLICY. PEREIRA SAID MANY TIMORESE WOULD SUPPORT ADITLA BECAUSE AUSTRALIA HAD MUCH HIGHER STANDARD OF LIVING THAN INDONESIA AND BECAUSE MAJORITY OF TIMORESE DID NOT LIKE INDONESIA.
HARROP

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